

THE TA CONTRACTION

The TA (transverse abdominis) contraction is getting a lot of hype these days. Should you know how to do it? Sure. Is it essential or necessary for recovery and lifting/core work? Maybe not.

How to do a TA contraction:

Take a diaphragmatic inhale. On exhale, GENTLY draw the top of your pubic bone to the bottom of your rib cage. Like a kegel, this isn't an all out level 10 contraction. You want a gentle contraction and lift of the muscles.

To check yourself, place your fingers just inside your hip bones. Don't press - that will cause too much pressure and have you likely over contracting to feel anything. When you do the exhale and TA contraction, you should feel the skin there sink in and move up. Again, these aren't drastic moves.

Want more guidance? Watch the video below.

When to do a TA contraction?

Like diaphragmatic breathing, the TA contraction is something that you'll want to know how to do, but you don't want to have to consciously think about it when exercising.

So how do you decide when to do a TA contraction then?

- Try practicing it with your breathing as part of your warm-up.
- If you are coning as a symptom of diastasis recti and a diaphragmatic exhale alone isn't reducing the coning, try adding in a TA contraction with the exhale.
- If you're doing core exercises and have trouble stabilizing your pelvis, try diaphragmatic breathing. Still having trouble? Add in a TA contraction.

What about during a lift? Should you do a TA contraction as part of your core bracing?

Not necessarily. If you're having symptoms, it might be beneficial for you to add in a TA contraction and see if that helps reduce symptoms. However, many people are actually stronger and can lift more weight with less pain when they let their body do its' thing and don't consciously try to fire their TA at a specific point in the lift. This is where activating the muscles as part of your warm-up can be beneficial.

There is no right or wrong. Everyone is unique which makes the recommendations unique. Play around with it and see how you feel.

Click the photo below to watch the video and learn how to do a TA contraction.

